



# WELCOME

**TO THE  
AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION**

***“It shall be the objective of the  
APWU to secure through collective  
bargaining and legislative effort a  
safe and healthy work environment,  
better working conditions and a  
better standard of living for the  
members of the APWU and their  
families.”***

**ARTICLE 2 OF THE  
NATIONAL CONSTITUTION**

NATIONAL  
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COORDINATOR  
SOUTHERN REGION

Omar M. Gonzalez  
COORDINATOR  
WESTERN REGION

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to the American Postal Workers Union (APWU)! If you are a USPS employee in the Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle, or Support Services crafts, the APWU is already working for you.

The APWU is dedicated to securing good wages, strong benefits, and job security for all our members. The benefits we enjoy today were not simply given to us by management; they were won through hard-fought negotiations. In exchange for the value of our labor, we work together to secure the best compensation that allows members to provide for themselves and their families now and into retirement.

As members, we share in many hard-won benefits, including cost-of-living adjustments (COLA), healthcare and retirement coverage, annual and sick leave, paid holidays, layoff protection, and dignity in the workplace. While specific benefits may vary by position or appointment, we all gain from the protections and improvements our solidarity makes possible. Are there challenges on the job? Certainly, but we face them together, standing side by side to ensure fairness and respect wherever we work.

Our modest union dues make it possible for us to function effectively as an organization that represents all of us. Through our shared membership in the APWU, we show our collective commitment to working together for fair pay, strong benefits, and dignity and respect on the job. Our unity reflects a shared belief that our strength comes from standing together, both in defending our rights at work and in speaking with one voice to our nation's leaders on the issues that matter to all working people.

This booklet was created to help you better understand the many benefits of being part of the APWU, our history, who we are, and how the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, works to support you every day of your postal career.

We would be proud to have you as a member, and with your commitment to join, we will always be fighting with you and for you.

In Union Solidarity,



Jonathan Smith  
President



Anna Smith  
Organization Director

# MEMBERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

*Our mandate to protect the common interest of postal workers and our desire to secure better wages, reasonable hours, and safe working conditions where we work demands that we strive to sign up non-members into our union.*

*As a Union we act also to strengthen the labor movement and all issues that improve and promote working class families nationwide. We fight for quality health benefits for our members. Every day the union works to improve working conditions and safety at the post office. We work to provide help to injured and retired workers. One of our major efforts is to secure a living wage so we can support ourselves and our families. United We Stand ~ Divided We Fall. Which side are you on?*

## **IN OUR UNION EVERY MEMBER HAS RIGHTS. THESE RIGHTS ARE LISTED IN THE UNION'S CONSTITUTION:**

1

Every member has the right to be respected as a human being.

2

Every member has the right to be respected as a brother or sister of this Union.

3

Every member has the right to freedom of speech and the right to be heard.

4

Every member has the right to the freedom to listen.

5

Every member has the right to the freedom of the press.

6

Every member has the right to participate in the activities of this Union.

7

Members shall not be denied the right to seek any office or the right to vote in this Union because of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, handicap, political affiliation, age or religion.

8

Every member has the right to support the candidate of his or her choice and to participate in that right with others.

9

Every member has the right to a fair trial, to be represented by an individual of his or her choice and to proper appeal procedures.

10

Every member has the right to be secure in his or her basic rights without fear of political, economic, physical or psychological intimidation.

# YOUR UNION'S STRUCTURE

We are an industrial union, which means our members come from different crafts, including clerks, maintenance, and motor vehicle, as well as from various operations such as postal nurses, material handlers, and support services. When the APWU was founded, these separate craft unions merged into a single industrial union. Each craft retained its identity, becoming a Division under the APWU Constitution. Despite the differences in craft and operation, all members share the same goals: ensuring a safe and healthy workplace, improving working conditions, and raising the standard of living for APWU members and their families.

## LOCALS

Each local union operates under its own constitution. This document governs how the local functions, including how officers are elected, how union business is conducted, and how dues are set, along with many other matters. Locals are autonomous, meaning the members decide how their local is run and how it represents workers. Ten or more members in the same postal installation may apply for a charter as a local union. A charter is the legal document recognizing that workers in a specific post office have formed a union and are officially recognized as a local.

## STATE ORGANIZATIONS

State organizations represent postal workers in smaller offices that do not have a local union. These workers are known as Members-at-Large. State organizations also play an important role in legislative work and political advocacy.

A state organization may be formed by two or more district councils or five or more locals within a state to represent locals across that state.

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

APWU Headquarters is located in Washington, DC. Members nationwide are served by national union officers. Those based in Washington are known as resident officers and are elected by the membership across the country. Each craft has a national director, including the Clerk Division, the Maintenance Division, the Motor Vehicle Service Division, and the Support Services Division. In addition, several national departments handle issues affecting members, including Industrial Relations, Legislative and Political matters, Organization, Research and Education, the APWU Health Plan, Human Relations, and Retirees.

The APWU is divided into five geographic regions: Eastern, Northeast, Southern, Central, and Western. Each region has an elected Regional Coordinator. Within these regions, elected National Business Agents serve specific crafts and geographic areas, representing locals and members in their assigned jurisdictions.

# OFFICERS

Though each local and state organization is autonomous, members in these organizations elect the national union officers by mail in a secret ballot.

Your current national officers are:

**Jonathan Smith** President – Editor  
**Debby Szereby** Executive Vice President  
**Elizabeth Powell** Secretary-Treasurer

**Charlie Cash** Industrial Relations Director  
**Lamont Brooks** Clerk Division Director  
**Idowu Balogun** Maintenance Division Director  
**Michael O. Foster** Motor Vehicle Service Division Director  
**Kimberly A. Maurer** Support Services Division Director  
**Amy Puhalski** Central Region Coordinator  
**Vince Tarducci** Eastern Region Coordinator  
**Tiffany Foster** Northeast Region Coordinator  
**Tony D. McKinnon, Sr.** Southern Region Coordinator  
**Omar M. Gonzalez** Western Region Coordinator

**Judy Beard** Legislative & Political Director – Assoc. Editor  
**Anna Smith** Organization Director  
**Joyce B. Robinson** Research & Education Director  
**Daleo Freeman** Human Relations Director  
**Sarah Rodriguez** Health Plan Director  
**Nancy E. Olumekor** Retirees Department Director

**Sam Lisenbe** Clerk Division Assistant Director  
**Ashley Cargill** Clerk Division Assistant Director  
**Robert Romanowski** Clerk Division Assistant Director  
**Jason Treier** Maintenance Division Assistant Director  
**Terry B. Martinez** Maintenance Division Assistant Director  
**Garrett Langley** Motor Vehicle Division Assistant Director

### CLERK DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

**Pete Coradi** **Mike Hetticher**  
**Tom O'Brien** **Scott M. Hoffman**  
**Pamela Richardson** **Joseph Zamenick**  
**John Jackson** **Gregory Becker**  
**Chuck Locke** **Fabiola Dominguez**  
**Rachel Walthall** **Bill Mazurowski**  
**Liz Swigert** **Sandra Munoz Hernandez**  
**James Stevenson** **Emily Weber**  
**Brian Dunsmore** **Morning Dunn**  
**Daniel F. Skemp** **Carlton Williams**  
**Michael William Funk Jr.** **Sharon Curtis**  
**Jim DeMauro** **Kim Miller**  
**Doris Orr Richardson** **Leo Kreyenbuhl**  
**Pamela Smith** **James DeRidder**  
**Charles Tillman** **Clifton Johnston**  
**Devendra Rathore** **Philip Thomas**  
**Diann Scurlark** **Joe Macias**  
**Joe Jolley** **Joyce Muhammad**  
**Todd Elkerton** **Erika Williams**

### MAINTENANCE DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

**John Gearhard** **Josh Montgomery**  
**Jeffrey S. Beaton** **Stephanie Logan**  
**Carlos Paz** **Kyle Popek**  
**Dave Sarnacki** **John Hunt**  
**Hector Baez** **Steven Duckworth**

### MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICE DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

**Bruce Amey** **Rick White**  
**Jerome Pittman** **Shana Parker**  
**Dyrike Shaw** **Nigel Deven Thomas**

### SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

**Orlando L. Anderson**

### OTHER NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

**Samuel Hernandez** **Michael C. Vitug**

# APWU DEPARTMENTS AND DIVISIONS

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Industrial Relations Director is responsible for Labor-Management, national negotiations, mechanization, health and safety for all divisions of the APWU and the administration of the contract.

## LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

The Legislative/Political Director is responsible for directing all activities of the APWU with regard to legislation of interest to the members and their families; to develop publicity programs; be the Editor of the news bulletin and the Associate Editor of the official publication of the APWU; work in cooperation with the AFL-CIO and other national and international unions with regard to legislation and assist the President in the distribution of COPA (Committee on Political Action) funds.

## ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT

The Organization Director is responsible for maintaining and increasing the membership of our union; directing the organization of the unorganized; promoting, encouraging and advising membership committees in all phases of membership recruitment programs; preparing and maintaining organizing material that appeals to respective membership of all divisions under jurisdiction of the APWU.

## RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

The Research and Education Director is responsible for conducting research and administering educational programs at the national, regional, state, area and local levels. Education shall be a mandatory part of the business of the APWU, particularly education in labor history, labor problems, grievance procedure, the objective and problems of the APWU, its members, and their families.

## HUMAN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Human Relations Director prepares and directs programs in equal opportunity, civic, community service, and other related programs. The President reserves the right to appoint representative(s) with the recommendation of the Human Relations Director to handle OWCP and EEO cases, on an "as needed" basis, to work under the direction of the Human Relations Director.

## RETIREES DEPARTMENT

The Retirees Department Director is responsible for directing the objectives of the department; legislative and political activity; administering retirement educational programs; organizing new members of the Retirees Department and Local and State Retiree Chapters; and services the needs of retired members and their survivors.

## CLERK DIVISION

This division is responsible for administering the clerk craft provisions of the contract found in Article 37. The craft officers are assigned to deal with clerk issues related to jobs, lay-offs, pay, assignments, bids and posting, representation, safety, light duty higher level work, craft work and other matters related to the clerk craft.

## MAINTENANCE DIVISION

This division, in addition to administering the maintenance craft provisions of the contract found in Article 38, is also responsible for handling USPS handbooks and manuals. This craft handles the issues related to work assignments, representation and other matters pertaining to the maintenance craft.

## MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION (MVS)

The director is responsible for handling all problems and grievances pertaining to MVS. The Director is a member of the Labor-Management Committee and the National Negotiations Committee; chairs the Motor Vehicle Service Division Council meeting to be held in conjunction with the National Convention and All-Craft Conference and is responsible for maintaining all records of the MVS membership.

## SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

This division is comprised of members from Information Service Centers, Mail Transport Equipment Service Centers, Mail Equipment Shops, Material Distribution Centers, Operating Service Facilities, Mail Transport Operations, Postal Medical Units, other non-mail processing facilities or operations and related operations in the private sector with the right to ratify their respective agreements.

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF OUR UNION

Your Union, the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, represents more than 250,000 employees of the U.S. Postal Service who are clerks, maintenance, motor vehicle service, support services, and nurse employees as well as retirees.

Postal unions date back to the 19th Century and parallel the growth of the former Post Office Department.

The early unions had essentially no bargaining rights, preventing them from negotiating with management on working conditions, wages and the hours of employment. So, the unions were lobbying organizations because almost all of a postal employee's work and home life was dependent on the whim of Congress. Not until around 1900 did the American Federation of Labor (a federation of many industrial unions) include the Chicago Postal Union (Local #1), which helped bolster postal worker's efforts to fight for their rights. The struggles for better pay, recognition of the union by management, better conditions at post offices continued for years without much improvement.

From 1967 to 1969, postal wages did not increase at all, although Congress raised its own pay 41 % over that period. Working conditions were getting worse, not better. Workhours were at the whim of management and the mail was piling up in many cities.

In 1968 the situation was so bad within the Post Office that the President of the United States established a commission called the Kappel Commission. This Commission concluded that postal workers deserved the same collective bargaining rights afforded to private-sector workers under the National Labor Relations Act. Congress, however, failed to act on the commission's recommendation.



The Great Postal Strike of 1970 – In March 1970, full-time employees earned about \$6,200 to start and workers with 21 years of service averaged only

\$8,440. Workers grew increasingly frustrated with Congress' inaction and management's oppression. So, on March 18, 1970, thousands of New York City postal workers walked off the job in protest. Within days, they were joined by 200,000 others in 30 major cities. Mail service ground to a halt and the plight of postal workers was finally brought to the public's attention. The strike was soon settled, with Congress approving a 6 % wage increase, retroactive to the previous December.

The strike helped the effort to push for the enactment of the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, which granted unions the right to negotiate with management over their wages, benefits and working conditions. In lieu of the right to strike, a binding arbitration process was established for resolving contract disputes.

When the Postal Reorganization Act became law on Aug. 12, 1970, it replaced the cabinet-level Post Office department with the independent United States Postal Service. In



1971, the first union contract between the USPS and its unions was negotiated. Seven postal unions participated in the first collective bargaining session. Seeing the need for a united front, five postal unions, the United Federation of Postal Clerks, National Postal Union, National Association of Post Office & General Services Maintenance Employees, National Federation of Motor Vehicle Employees, and the National Association of Special Delivery Messengers – merged to create the American Postal Workers Union in July 1971.

In the first contract, a starting postal worker's salary was raised to \$8,488. Four decades of struggle had finally brought dignity to hard working postal workers in the form of living wages, necessary benefits, and the ability to retire with seniority.

# YOU HAVE A VOICE IN WASHINGTON

You have someone in Washington, DC on Capitol Hill fighting to protect postal jobs, wages, and benefits postal employees and retirees depend on. APWU has within its structure a Legislative & Political Department. The Legislative & Political Director's responsibility is to direct the legislative activities of APWU and be an advocate for APWU members and their families in the halls of Congress.

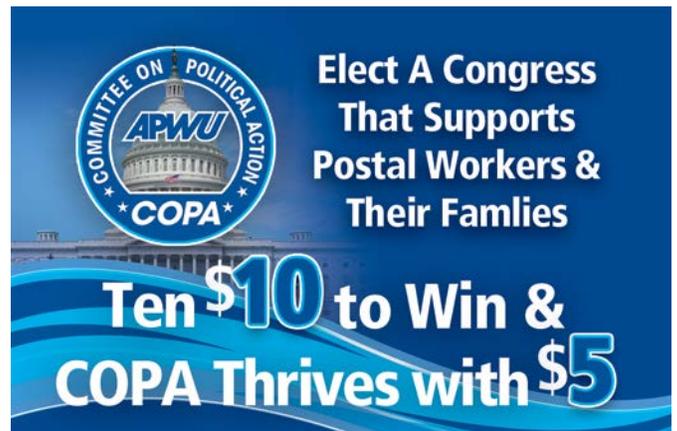
The APWU Legislative and Political Department works tirelessly to educate members of Congress, and their staff, on the impact's legislation will have on our members and their families. The Postal Service has faced threats of privatization, plant consolidations, changing retirement rules, slowing down the mail, and reducing federal/postal benefits. Today, our work has never been more important. To continue fending off these attacks, we need your help. Join our team and join the fight!

With our collective strength, we can fight back against corporate-funded politicians and support pro-worker members of Congress and candidates. Our Committee on Political Action (COPA) fund is

narrowly focused, voluntary, and a proven force in shaping postal policy.

There are several convenient ways to contribute to COPA that can be found by visiting the COPA page on the APWU website, [apwu.org/copa](http://apwu.org/copa). You can participate in our new COPA Thrives With \$5 campaign or join the previous campaign of Ten to Win. Any amount you can contribute is welcome! No amount is too big or too small.

COPA is the APWU's non-partisan Committee on Political Action created to raise voluntary, political contributions. By making contributions to COPA, you strengthen our voice on Capitol Hill and help advance our legislative priorities through supporting elected officials and candidates who are committed to maintaining a strong, public Postal Service and who will promote policies that benefit working people. To join our fight, please log into the members only portion of [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) and contribute to COPA today!



# BUILDING STRENGTH IN COMMUNITIES

## THE AUXILIARY TO THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

Welcome to the American Postal Workers Union. As part of the APWU family, we are constantly aware of the changes that affect our daily lives. The Auxiliary consists of caring family and friends of the APWU as well as retirees and their families. We welcome your family and friends as members in the Auxiliary through your sponsorship. Our main focus is to assist the APWU in attaining a better quality of life for their membership and their families.

By sponsoring a member in the Auxiliary, you and your family will share unique perspectives and accomplishments. We can help them understand the job benefits while getting them involved in ways to create a better workplace environment. We are a grassroots organization of volunteers serving out a deep abiding commitment to our American Postal Workers Union and its members. United by common goals and interests, Auxiliary members are engaged in the kind of community and civic involvement that is necessary to present the best possible image of labor to the American People. The Auxiliary stresses both political and philanthropic work.

## WE ARE ALL ONE FAMILY – THE APWU FAMILY.

We invite you to be a part of our auxiliary family. By returning the membership form below, you can enjoy the benefits of Auxiliary membership for six months. Our newsletter “Auxiliary New & Views” is a major communication link with our members. You can also visit our website at [www.apwuauxiliary.org](http://www.apwuauxiliary.org) and follow the links to join and/or pay your membership fee. Remember to enter the coupon code 6MOFREE. We hope you will consider extending your membership by joining the Auxiliary. The cost is minimal. \$5.00 per year pays your national dues. State and local dues vary according to your home address. By being informed, you can unite with others in your community. Come and join us as a member in the Auxiliary to the APWU.



## APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP AUXILIARY TO THE AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PAID FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSORING MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERS LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_



**COUPON CODE: 6MOFREE**

**PLEASE MAIL TO:**  
NATIONAL AUXILIARY TREASURER  
JANEIL PAYNE  
4678 DUKE CT NE  
SALEM OR 97301

LOCAL DUES \_\_\_\_\_

STATE DUES \_\_\_\_\_

NATIONAL DUES \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE

## 1. Who is the APWU?

The American Postal Workers Union (APWU) is national organization made up of USPS employees who came together to form the union. The APWU is the members. All of the people who formed this group are members, and together we protect our rights, improve our working conditions, and advance the interests of all members and their families.

Representing more than 225,000 current and former postal employees in every state and territory, the APWU is one of the largest unions of postal workers in the world. We are your exclusive collective bargaining agent if you work in the Clerk, Maintenance, or Motor Vehicle Service crafts. We also represent employees in Support Services, Material Distribution Centers, Information Services Centers, Mail Equipment Shops, and Operating Services Facilities.

## 2. What do we do as a union?

APWU members negotiate, interpret, and enforce a National Agreement (contract) with the Postal Service. This contract establishes wages, working conditions, and benefits for all employees under its jurisdiction. We also represent you when workplace issues arise, including discipline, seniority disputes, harassment, discrimination, or other management actions. In addition, we work to ensure your workplace remains safe, healthy, and prepared to adapt to changes in technology and operations.

## 3. What are some of the benefits of belonging?

As an APWU member, you have a voice in shaping your future. You can attend local meetings, vote for local and national officers, vote on the contract, run for office, and petition for changes within the union. Members receive our bimonthly magazine, *The American Postal Worker*, and have access to safety and health programs designed to keep you informed and protected. You are also eligible for the APWU Health Plan, which offers comprehensive coverage at an affordable cost, and may participate in programs such as APWU Scholarships for college or vocational training, the APWU MasterCard,

the Voluntary Benefits Plan, Union Plus, the Accident Benefit Association, and Aflac.

## 4. Who can join?

You may become an APWU member if you are a non-supervisory USPS employee within our jurisdiction (see #1 above), regardless of race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, political affiliation, age, or religion. Supervisors, management personnel, and employees represented by other postal unions may join only for the purpose of participating in the APWU Health Plan.



## 5. Who is responsible for how the union runs?

The members are! Every level of our union operates democratically. Your voice matters, and you vote on everything from local leaders to National Convention delegates. The National Convention, held every two years, is our highest governing body. Between conventions, the National Executive Board directs union policies and programs.

## 6. How are officers elected?

Local and state constitutions guide elections in your area. National officers are elected by mail ballot every three years. Craft officers, business agents, and regional coordinators are elected by members in each specific division or region. Anyone can run for national office by filing a petition in accordance with our Constitution and Bylaws.

## 7. How do we negotiate the National Agreement?

Our National Negotiating Team, which includes the President, Executive Vice President, Director of Industrial Relations, and craft directors, meets with Postal Service management for several months before the contract expires. The team proposes contract language, management responds, and through this give-and-take process, negotiations continue until the best possible agreement is reached.

## 8. Do I get to vote on the contract?

Yes. Any National Agreement that is negotiated is only valid if the membership approves it. After the National Negotiating Team reaches an agreement, a Rank-and-File Bargaining Advisory Committee reviews it. If the committee approves, the contract goes to the entire membership for ratification. If not, the committee can return the contract to the National Negotiating Team to reopen negotiations.



# AMERICAN POSTAL WORKERS UNION

## 9. What about strikes?

The right to strike is an undeniable right of all American workers. However, federal law prohibits strikes by postal and federal employees and requires that unresolved disputes be submitted to arbitration to an impartial third party for resolution if contract negotiations fail. While our position is “no contract, no work,” the 1982 APWU National Convention authorized national leadership to continue negotiations past the contract deadline if necessary to reach an agreement, but only as long as postal workers continue to be covered under the previous contract.

## 10. How are we fighting privatization?

Privatization is when management tries to contract out our work to private companies that hire non-union, low-wage workers. We have been successfully fighting efforts to privatize postal services for decades and will continue to monitor every attempt to contract out work and enforce the National Agreement.

## 11. What if I have a grievance?

If you believe management has violated your rights or you experience harassment or discrimination, talk to your steward right away. Your steward, who serves as your union representative on the work floor, will determine whether a violation has occurred and will attempt to reach a settlement with your immediate supervisor. If this effort fails, the matter can be appealed to a higher level of management. If all efforts still fail to produce a satisfactory solution, we may insist that an impartial arbitrator settle the dispute.



## 12. Are we affiliated with other organizations?

Yes. We are part of the AFL-CIO, a federation of over 60 labor unions with 12.5 million workers, and UNI, which represents workers in many service sectors worldwide.

## 13. Are we involved in legislation and politics?

Absolutely. We monitor laws that affect you and your family. Through our Committee on Political Action (COPA), we raise voluntary contributions to support legislators and campaigns that back working families and oppose those who consistently oppose our interests.



## 14. How can I stay informed?

You can stay up-to-date on issues that might affect you by attending local meetings, reading *The American Postal Worker* magazine and APWU News Bulletins, or visiting [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org). Your steward and local officers are always available to answer questions.

## 15. How much are the dues?

Dues vary from local to local. They include national dues established by the National Constitution and local dues determined by the local union. Once you join the APWU, dues are automatically deducted from your paycheck and appear on your pay stub. Your steward or a local officer can provide the exact amount.

## 16. How are dues spent?

Your dues support everything that helps you at work. As with any organization, a portion of dues is used for operating expenses, including contract negotiations, grievance handling above the local level, and arbitrations at all levels. Dues also fund publications, legal support, legislative efforts, education and training, and community service programs.

## 17. I'm not a member yet. How do I join?

Ask your steward or local officer for a Membership Application Form (1187) or visit [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org) to join online. For assistance with membership information, contact the Organization Department by phone at (202) 842-4227 or by email at [organization@apwu.org](mailto:organization@apwu.org).

## 18. I'm already a member. How can I help?

You are the union. By attending meetings, joining committees, organizing non-members, becoming a steward, or volunteering in union activities, you strengthen our union, build solidarity, and help protect and advance the rights and interests of all your fellow postal workers.

# REPRESENTATION

## NEGOTIATIONS

After the 1970 strike and the reorganization of the Post Office Department into the United States Postal Service in 1971, postal workers were legally permitted to negotiate with postal officials over wages and conditions of employment.

Under federal labor law, both parties meet to discuss and act to reach an agreement on work-related matters. When an agreement is reached by postal service management and union officials, the product of those efforts is called the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the National Agreement, or simply the contract.

It is called a collective bargaining agreement because the representatives of the members are authorized to negotiate and act on behalf of the collective members. Once an agreement is reached, the APWU membership must approve or ratify the contract for it to go into effect.

Our current contract contains more than 400 pages of provisions covering hours, working conditions, and wages. Working conditions include assignments and work rules. The contract is administered by the Local, State, Regional, and National Union.

## ENFORCEMENT

“Administered” means the contract is interpreted and applied by certified union representatives. These representatives police and enforce the contract. This enforcement takes place at Labor-Management Meetings held between postal and union officials and by giving the employees or union representatives the right to file grievances over violations of the contract provisions.



The contract contains graduating steps under which these grievances are handled. This is called the grievance-arbitration procedure. The contract declares that the main intent of this procedure is to resolve the grievance at the lowest possible level. The lowest possible level (Step 1) is on the work floor with you, your supervisor, and your shop steward.

A shop steward is a union member elected or appointed, according to the local constitution, to be your designated authorized representative and certified by the union leadership to enforce your rights under our contract.

If the grievance is not resolved locally, the matter can be appealed to Step 3 to be discussed and acted upon by an APWU National Business Agent and postal area Labor Relations Representatives. If the grievance is still not resolved, it may be appealed by the union to binding arbitration, in which a neutral arbitrator will conduct a hearing to determine which side is correct in the application of the contract provisions in dispute and award a remedy. Not all grievances are suitable for arbitration depending on the circumstances.

## WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

**In 1985, the United States Supreme Court upheld a National Labor Relations Board decision in which employees have the right to union representation during investigatory interviews. These rights are known as Weingarten Rights.**

**In the event you are called into a discussion with management, postal inspectors, or an Office of Inspector General (OIG) Agent, and you believe that discipline could result from the interview or discussion, read the following statement:**

***“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting. Without my union representative present, I respectfully choose not to answer any questions or participate in this discussion.”***

# YOUR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK

## WHAT WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS DO MEMBERS HAVE?

Postal workers are expected to work safely, remain attentive on duty, and report hazards at work.

## WHAT ARE MANAGEMENT'S SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES?

Management is responsible for providing safe working conditions in all postal facilities where postal workers are assigned and for complying with federal safety laws. Management must also take immediate steps to correct unsafe conditions that are reported.

## DOES THE UNION HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY IN REGARDS TO SAFETY?

Yes. The union's responsibility is to cooperate with and assist management in fulfilling their responsibilities and to enforce contractual provisions on safety and health.

## HOW DO EMPLOYEES REPORT UNSAFE AND/OR UNHEALTHY WORKING CONDITIONS/PRACTICES?

If you believe you are being required to work under unsafe conditions or practices you should:

- Notify your supervisor by filing a PS Form 1767, Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition, or Practice. Identify the work area and facility, then briefly describe the unsafe condition you believe exists. Do not use general statements.
- Submit your completed form to your supervisor or safety office.

- Your supervisor is required to immediately investigate the condition and take necessary corrective action.
- Notify your shop steward or local union, who will then discuss the alleged unsafe condition with your supervisor.
- File a grievance if your supervisor takes no corrective action to abate the condition during your tour of duty.
- Make a written report to your APWU Representative on the Joint Labor-Management Safety and Health Committee to discuss the issue.

## WHAT PROOF IS THERE THAT A REPORT OF A HAZARD OR UNSAFE CONDITION HAS BEEN REPORTED?

Pursuant to postal regulations, your supervisor is required to document the actions taken to correct the reported matter and issue you the blue copy of the PS 1767 as a receipt, while also providing updates every seven (7) days until the matter is corrected. If management claims there is no unsafe condition, you should contact your Shop Steward to ensure safety regulations are complied with.

## DOESN'T THE GOVERNMENT PROTECT ME ALREADY?

Not entirely. The government enacts the safety laws, but it is union leaders that help enforce contractual safety provisions. In addition, an employee or union representative may contact the Occupational Safety & Health Administration and file a complaint if, after reporting a hazardous condition, postal management has not corrected the unsafe condition.



***More than 34,000 postal workers are injured at work each year. USPS currently spends up to \$1.8 billion a year in workers compensation costs and unfortunately postal workers die on duty every year.***

**DO NOT BECOME A POSTAL STATISTIC  
TAKE WORKPLACE SAFETY SERIOUSLY!**

# FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

## BASIC LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child's birth or placement);
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered service member's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

## BENEFITS & PROTECTIONS

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. An employer may not interfere with an individual's FMLA rights or retaliate against someone for using or trying to use FMLA leave, opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA, or being involved in any proceeding under or related to the FMLA.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria in order to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave; and
- Works at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employees' worksite, this does not apply to USPS employees.

## REQUESTING LEAVE

Generally, employees must give a 30-day advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give a 30-day notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and generally follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

## EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility. Employers must notify their employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

## ENFORCEMENT

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information call  
(866) 487-9243 or visit [dol.gov/whd](https://dol.gov/whd)

*Information on this page excerpted from:*  
<https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/posters/fmlaen.pdf>

# TOGETHER. BETTER HEALTH. HONORED TO SERVE YOU



## – HEALTH PLAN HIGHLIGHTS –

### HIGH OPTION

- Low copays for office visits, including specialists, urgent care centers and generic drugs
- Low deductibles
- Routine dental coverage
- Alternative care: Chiropractic and acupuncture
- Hearing services
- Cancer Centers of Excellence paid at 95%

*100% coverage when you choose in network providers for:*

- Preventive care and screenings
- Routine Maternity care
- Accidental injury within 72 hours (outpatient care)
- Covered lab tests when you use LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics
- Health management programs: Healthy Pregnancy, tobacco/e-cigarette cessation, weight management

### CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION

- A Personal Care Account (PCA) provides 100% coverage for the first \$1,200 of your annual medical expenses for Self Only coverage or \$2,400 for Self Plus One & Self and Family coverage.
- No upfront deductible, coinsurance or copay until your PCA is exhausted.
- Unused funds in the account rollover to the next year provided you remain a Health Plan Member
- Completing a Health Risk Assessment adds additional funds to your PCA. Members now receive additional funds to their PCA when they complete their annual physical.
- Cancer Centers of Excellence paid at 90%.
- Dental and vision reimbursement is available under your Personal Care Account.

*100% coverage when you choose in network providers for:*

- Preventive care and screenings
- Routine Maternity care
- Health management programs: Healthy Pregnancy & tobacco/e-cigarette cessation

*Under both APWU Health Plans you will have available to you:*

- Secure on-line access to healthcare data
- Ability to receive care nationally and abroad
- Nearly 1 million providers to choose from
- Visit your provider via computer or mobile device

\*coverage for the above Options may change during open season



**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT  
APWUHP.COM OR CALL (800) 222-2798**

# BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

These are just some of the many achievements APWU members have made possible by standing together. When you join the APWU, you have a voice in the benefits negotiated on your behalf and in how your union operates. Your membership means representation, protection, and the power to help shape decisions that affect your job, your pay, and your future.

Do not let someone else decide your future. Be part of the decision making. Be part of the power. Be APWU.

## ALL APWU MEMBERS

- Union Democracy
- A voice and a vote
- Membership ratification of contracts
- Direct elections of all union officers
- Access to a wealth of information at union meetings, union publications, news bulletins and websites
- Opportunities to participate at all levels of the organization
- Discrimination protections under the APWU Constitution
- Outstanding representation at all levels of the organization
- A team to represent you in contract negotiations
- An effective grievance-arbitration procedure to adjudicate disputes with management
- Protections against unjust discipline, including termination
- Prohibitions against unilateral actions by our employer
- An active legislative program that fights for the interest of postal workers on Capitol Hill
- Representation and provision for safe working conditions

## CAREER EMPLOYEES

- Wage protections
- Regular pay increases
- Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)
- Night differential pay
- Sunday premium pay
- Enforcement of overtime provisions
  - Time-and-a-half for overtime
  - Penalty pay for excessive overtime
- Out-of-schedule premium
- Comprehensive Health insurance options
- APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan with 95% of the premiums paid for by the USPS
- Basic Life Insurance with additional insurance options available
- 11 paid holidays
- Annual Leave accrual
- Sick Leave accrual
- Flexible Spending Accounts for health care and dependent care
- Holiday scheduling and overtime rights
- Allowances for uniform and work clothing
- Contractual provisions against layoffs
- Jobs awarded by seniority, not favoritism
- Excellent job security
- Excessing limitations
- Defined benefits and defined contribution retirement plans

# BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

## POSTAL SUPPORT EMPLOYEES

- Wage protections
- Regular pay increases
- Annual leave accrual
- Night differential pay
- Enforcement of overtime provisions
  - Time-and-a-half for overtime
  - Penalty pay for excessive overtime
- Higher level pay when performing higher level work
- Work hour guarantees when scheduled, and you report for work
- USPS Health benefits eligibility upon entering on duty
- Opportunity to enroll in the Postal Service Health Benefits Program after first 360-day term and upon reappointment – with up to 75 percent of the total premium paid by USPS for any PSE who selects the APWU Consumer Driven Health Plan
- 6 paid holidays with option to have annual leave balance credited in lieu of holiday leave pay if you work on a holiday
- Annual uniform allowance
- Strong contractual language that provides opportunities for career appointments
- Representation in the grievance procedure
- Reappointments by seniority, not favoritism

## WHEN YOU ARE CONVERTED TO CAREER

Conversion refers to the process of changing a non-career employee's status to a career appointment. PSEs should not be separated and then given a career appointment unless the employee's appointment expires before conversion. Some key benefits you receive upon conversion are listed below. Be sure to note that there are critical time limits to enroll.

**POSTAL SERVICE HEALTH BENEFIT PROGRAM (PSHBP)** — Outside of Open Season, newly eligible employees may enroll within 60 days of becoming eligible. [opm.gov]

**FEDERAL EMPLOYEES GROUP LIFE INSURANCE (FGLI)** — You will automatically receive Basic Life Insurance coverage. You must have Basic insurance to elect any Optional coverage and must enroll within 60 days of eligibility. [opm.gov]

**THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP)** — TSP is a retirement savings and investment plan for federal employees. All career employees may enroll or change their TSP contributions at any time. Career employees hired after July 31, 2010, are automatically enrolled in TSP, with 5% of basic pay deducted each pay period and deposited into the traditional TSP account, unless you choose to change or stop contributions. [tsp.gov]

**FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS (FSA)** — Once converted, employees who wish to enroll in either the Health Care FSA or Dependent Care FSA must do so within 60 days of eligibility. Health Care FSA can be used to cover health care expenses for you and/or your family that are not paid by your or your spouse's medical, dental, or vision plans or insurance. Dependent Care FSA can be used if you have dependent care expenses.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

**APWU** – [apwu.org](http://apwu.org)

**APWU Health Plan** – [apwuhp.com](http://apwuhp.com)

**AFL-CIO** – [aflcio.org](http://aflcio.org)

**Coalition of Black Trade Unionists** – [cbtu.org](http://cbtu.org)

**Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW)** – [cluw.org](http://cluw.org)

**USPS** – [liteblue.usps.gov](http://liteblue.usps.gov)

**Merit System Protection Board (MSPB)** – [mspb.gov](http://mspb.gov)

**Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)** – [opm.gov/retirement-services/csrs-information](http://opm.gov/retirement-services/csrs-information)

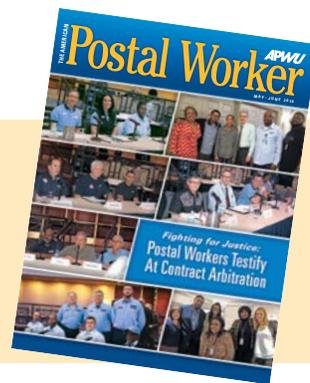
**Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)** – [opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information](http://opm.gov/retirement-services/fers-information)

**Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF)** – [postalrelief.com](http://postalrelief.com)

**U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)** – [opm.gov](http://opm.gov)

# MEMBER-ONLY PRIVILEGES

The *American Postal Worker* is a magazine dedicated to providing you news within our union and throughout the nation. Here you will read about issues we face as a union and find important information from your national officers.



Union Plus benefits are only for union families. Through Union Plus you can find members-only discounts on auto buying and insurance, cellular phone service, vacations, entertainment, AAA, the APWU MasterCard sponsored by Union Plus, and much more. For more information: [www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org) | [www.apwucard.com](http://www.apwucard.com)

Voluntary Benefits Plan has been providing benefits to APWU members and their families since 1986. We offer Dental, Disability Insurance, Home/Auto Insurance, Legal Services, Cancer Insurance, Life Insurance, a Free Vision Discount program, and many other products. The plans are available to Active, PSE, Retiree, and Associate dues-paying members only. Visit or call for more information: [www.VoluntaryBenefitsPlan.com](http://www.VoluntaryBenefitsPlan.com) | (800) 422-4492



Accident Benefit Association is member-owned and offers disability and accidental death and dismemberment benefits, guaranteed issue whole and term life insurance, as well as extended accident wage replacement benefits. Visit or call for more information: [www.apw-aba.org](http://www.apw-aba.org) | (800) 526-2890

APWU Members enjoy substantial savings on the Aflac Personal Indemnity and the Specified Health Event insurance plans. The plans pay cash benefits directly to members to help with the significant expenses associated with major illnesses, even if other health plans cover them. Members have direct access to the Aflac call center at (855) 378-4712.





# Stand With Your Co-Workers Today!

## American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE AUTHORIZATION FOR DEDUCTION OF DUES



LAST NAME (Please Print)		FIRST NAME (Please Print)		MI	SOCIAL SECURITY NO. or EIN (Entire SS# Is Req.)	
MAILING ADDRESS				CITY		STATE
HOME PHONE NO. ( )		MOBILE PHONE NO. ( )		EMAIL ADDRESS		
WORK LOCATION (Post Office) & STATE			WORK FINANCE NUMBER - - - - -	CRAFT		POSITION TYPE (Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> CAREER <input type="checkbox"/> PSE
SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE			DATE	ARE YOU CURRENTLY PAYING DUES TO ANOTHER UNION? If so, select which union dues should be cancelled: <input type="checkbox"/> NALC <input type="checkbox"/> NPMHU <input type="checkbox"/> NRLCA		

Would you like to receive mobile text alerts from APWU?  YES  NO

If you choose to receive mobile alerts, you are authorizing the mobile communications. Note: Msg & data rates may apply. Text STOP to 91990 to stop receiving messages. Text HELP to 91990 for more information.

Preferred Contact Number  HOME  MOBILE

By selecting my preferred contact number, I am authorizing the APWU to call me or send me recorded messages using automated technology to the telephone number entered above.

# BUILDING UNION POWER... Together!

Become actively involved in your union by expressing areas you can help:



- \_\_\_ Outreach – Representing the APWU at events and meetings, etc.
- \_\_\_ Welcoming New Members – Orientations, organizing, etc.
- \_\_\_ Work Place Safety – Daily huddles, weekly talks, safety captain, etc.
- \_\_\_ Community Involvement – Talking with neighbors, family and friends about issues
- \_\_\_ Transportation – Getting people to and from events, meetings, etc.

In addition to having a voice and a vote in your union, and all of the collective bargaining rights you rely on you will have the opportunity to participate in the following programs: APWU MasterCard, Voluntary Benefits Plan, Union Plus, Accident Benefit Association, and Aflac.

I hereby assign to the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, from any salary or wages earned or to be earned by me as a member (in my present or future employment) such regular and periodic membership dues as the APWU may certify as due and owing from me, as may be established from time to time by the APWU. I authorize and direct the USPS to deduct such amounts from my pay and to remit same to the APWU at such times and in such manner as may be agreed upon between myself and the APWU at any time while this authorization is in effect, which includes a yearly subscription for The American Postal Worker magazine as part of the membership dues.

This assignment, authorization and direction shall be irrevocable for a period of one (1) year from the date of delivery to the APWU, and I agree and direct that this assignment, authorization and direction shall be automatically renewed and shall be irrevocable for successive periods of one (1) year unless written notice by certified mail using PS Form 1186 is given by me to the APWU not more than twenty (20) days and not less than ten (10) days prior to the expiration of each period of one year, or within ten (10) days after the date I start work if I am rehired for any new term of Postal Support employment. In addition to the above, if I am a Postal Support Employee, this assignment shall remain in effect if I should be rehired within 180 days after the conclusion of my present term of Postal Support employment.

This agreement is freely made pursuant to the provisions of the Postal Reorganization Act and is not contingent upon the existence of any agreement between the Union and the Postal Service.

### FOR USE BY UNION OFFICIAL

The regular dues of this organization, for the above-named member, are currently established at \$ \_\_\_\_\_ biweekly.

SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED UNION OFFICIAL		DATE
LOCAL UNION NAME (or State if MAL office)		LOCAL UNION FINANCE NUMBER
ORGANIZER'S NAME		NOTES



**PRODUCED BY THE  
ORGANIZATION DEPARTMENT  
JONATHAN SMITH, PRESIDENT  
ANNA SMITH, ORGANIZATION DIRECTOR**

**Revised January 2026**

